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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Identical letters dated 11 February 2016 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

The situation in the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, continues to deteriorate as a result of the unrelenting illegal and destructive policies and practices by Israel, the occupying Power, that are causing immense suffering to the Palestinian civilian population under occupation and severely diminishing the prospects for a peaceful solution. Unprotected, despite the very clear provisions of international law according protection to civilians under foreign occupation, the Palestinian people continue to endure countless human rights violations and war crimes at the hands of the Israeli occupying forces and terrorist settlers. Tensions have consequently remained high, and anger, fear and despair among our people are rising as the convictions and chances for peace are further and further eroded.

Since our previous letter, the criminal actions by Israeli occupying forces and settlers have markedly intensified, no doubt bolstered by the culture of impunity and lawlessness that continues to prevail due to the failure to hold Israel accountable for any of its violations and crimes against the Palestinian people and throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Such impunity has not only absolved Israel from its legal obligations as an occupying Power but has also emboldened its continued perpetration of crimes without fear of punishment. This has been to the grave detriment of the Palestinian people, who are enduring mounting casualties, harassment, humiliation and the destruction of their properties and land as the occupying Power continues to oppress the population and to impose its illegal colonial settlement agenda in complete disregard and violation of all norms and rules of international law, deepening this already grave injustice.

I regret to inform you that with each passing day more innocent Palestinian lives have been lost, among them many children and women. Just yesterday, another Palestinian child lost his life to this brutal occupation. Omar Jawabra (age 16) was shot in the chest and killed by Israeli occupying forces in Al-Arroub refugee camp,

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north of Al-Khalil. The Palestinian Ministry of Health has documented that, since the beginning of October 2015, Israeli occupying forces have killed 171 Palestinians, including 35 children and 8 women, and injured at least 16,000 Palestinians. Out of the 16,000 civilians injured, hundreds have been injured severely and have been forced to live the rest of their life with permanent and debilitating injuries, impacting forever their futures, their families, their communities and the society as a whole.

At the same time, Israel, the occupying Power, continues its arrest and detention raids throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Palestinian civilians are being detained daily, with young men and boys especially targeted by the Israeli occupying forces, who routinely assault, humiliate and severely abuse, including torture, Palestinian civilians they have arbitrarily arrested or detained. It is beyond shocking that, since October 2015, more than 2,700 Palestinians have been arrested by the occupying forces, with children constituting nearly half of that number. In this regard, I must draw your attention to the critical plight of one of the 527 Palestinians being held under administrative detention by Israel. Palestinian journalist Muhammad Al-Qiq, age 33, has been on a continuous hunger strike for 79 days in protest against his administrative detention without charge; his health has dramatically deteriorated and his life is in danger. We draw the international community's attention to his plight and urge it to undertake all efforts to compel Israel to release Mr. Al-Qiq and to fully respect its obligations under international humanitarian law in this regard, while we also underscore the continuing plight of the more than 6,000 Palestinian prisoners and detainees, among them children and women, being held captive by Israel, the occupying Power, and reiterate our demand for their release and respect for their human rights.

In addition, as has been widely reported in recent weeks, the occupying Power has continued with its destructive colonial settlement campaign throughout Occupied Palestine, including and especially in and around Occupied East Jerusalem. Settlement construction and expansion continue, land confiscations continue and home demolitions continue, all unabated, depriving Palestinian civilians of their property and of shelter, rendering dozens of families homeless, violating numerous other human rights and further undermining the contiguity of our land and the viability of the two-State solution on the 1967 borders. International humanitarian law is blatantly clear — the transfer by the occupying Power of its civilian population into the occupied territory is strictly prohibited and constitutes a grave breach. In equal regard, the wanton and deliberate destruction of civilian properties and all such acts of collective punishment and reprisal are prohibited and constitute breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Yet, Israel continues to trample the law and continues to evade any and all accountability for these crimes.

In this regard, in addition to grieving the loss of a loved one, countless Palestinian families have had to endure the collective punishment of the destruction of their homes by the occupying Power. Despite the international appeals for it to cease such reprisals and respect international humanitarian law, Israel persists with the punitive demolition of the homes of Palestinians alleged to have perpetrated acts of violence against Israelis. Numerous families, including children, have been thus rendered homeless in the recent period, their dwelling and belongings completely destroyed by the occupying Power, in blatant acts of collective punishment. Surely,

such violations can only provoke more rage towards the occupation and further inflame tensions and hatred.

Below are just some of the innumerable crimes perpetrated by the occupying Power, in the period since our previous letter to you:

23 January 2016:

- A Palestinian girl, Ruqayya Abu 'Eid (age 13), was shot dead by Israeli occupying forces outside the illegal settlement "Anatot" to the north-east of Occupied East Jerusalem.

25 January 2016:

- Israeli warplanes launched multiple airstrikes targeting locations in the southern Gaza Strip.
- Israeli occupying forces detained 10 Palestinians from across the West Bank.
- Occupying forces assaulted four Palestinians after they were released from an Israeli detention centre near the "Salem" military complex, north-west of Jenin, causing serious physical harm, including bruising all over their bodies.
- Ibrahim Allan (age 23) and Hussein Abu Ghosh (age 17) were shot dead by Israeli occupying forces outside the illegal settlement of "Beit Horon", north-east of Ramallah.

26 January 2016:

- Israeli occupying forces detained four Palestinians from Jerusalem, Jenin and Qalqiliya.

27 January 2016:

- Israeli occupying forces demolished a Palestinian home and the foundations of another in Occupied East Jerusalem under the pretext of "construction without a permit".

28 January 2016:

- Occupying forces issued eviction orders to several Palestinian families from Ein Al-Rushrash, south of Nablus. There are about 85 Palestinians living in 30 residential structures in this locality.
- Occupying forces detained 20 Palestinians, including a lawmaker and four children, during pre-dawn raids across West Bank.

29 January 2016:

- Hundreds of Israeli occupying forces stormed Al-Quds Open University in Abu Dis and confiscated equipment and documents belonging to its student union.

30 January 2016:

- Israeli occupying forces opened fire on Palestinian farmers tending to their land located along the borderline to the south and north of the Gaza Strip.

31 January 2016:

- Occupying forces detained 10 Palestinians from Al-Khalil and Bethlehem.

- The occupying Power issued administrative detention orders, without charge or trial, against 32 Palestinian detainees, while 23 Palestinians had their sentences renewed.
- Amjad Sukkari (age 29) was shot dead by Israeli occupying forces at the Beit El military checkpoint, north-east of Ramallah.

1 February 2016:

- A Palestinian youth, Ahmad Toba (age 19), was shot dead by occupying forces near the illegal settlement "Salit", south of Tulkarem.
- Israeli occupying forces detained seven Palestinians, including children, during separate incidents across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.
- Occupying forces detained 10 Palestinian workers at the Tarqomia military checkpoint to the west of Al-Khalil.
- Occupying forces detained three Palestinians, including a disabled minor, in Al-Khalil.

2 February 2016:

- Israeli bulldozers demolished two Palestinian houses in Occupied East Jerusalem.
- Illegal Israeli settlers assaulted and injured a Palestinian youth outside an illegal Israeli settlement of "Kiryat Arba" located on the eastern outskirts of Al-Khalil.
- Occupying forces demolished several Palestinian homes in Janba and Al-Halawa, south of Al-Khalil.
- Israeli occupying forces detained at least 34 Palestinians across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, mostly during pre-dawn and night raids.

3 February 2016:

- Occupying forces detained 20 Palestinians from across the West Bank, in addition to four fishermen from the Gaza Strip.
- Israeli occupying bulldozers infiltrated Gaza's borders from the eastern part of Al-Fakhari village, east of Khan Younis.
- Israeli settlers entered the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in Occupied East Jerusalem, inciting and provoking tension with Palestinian worshipers.
- Israeli occupying forces demolished a car repair workshop in the town of Issawiya, in the northern outskirts of Occupied East Jerusalem.
- Ahmed Rajeh Zakarneh, Mohammed Ahmed Kmail and Ahmed Najeh Abu Al-Rab were shot and killed by Israeli occupying forces outside Bab Al-Amoud Gate in Occupied East Jerusalem.

4 February 2016:

- Israeli occupying forces demolished a Palestinian private-owned hall in Al-Ezariya, east of Jerusalem, under the pretext of "construction without a permit".

- A Palestinian child, Mohammad Abbas Zakarneh (age 16), was run over and seriously injured in the head by an Israeli armoured truck, during a military raid in the town of Qabatia, south of Jenin.
- Occupying forces demolished residential tents and animal barns in the village of Mekassar, in northern Jordan Valley, and demolished three agricultural structures in the village of Bil'in, near Ramallah.
- Israeli occupying forces detained 29 Palestinians overnight mostly during pre-dawn raids across the West Bank.

5 February 2016:

- A Palestinian child, Haitham Ismail Al-Baw (age 14), was shot dead by Israeli occupying forces in Halhul, north of Al-Khalil. His cousin, Wajdi Yusif Al-Baw (age 12), was reportedly injured and detained during the incident.
- Israeli occupying forces issued a demolition order for the family home of Mourad Adais (age 15), who was detained in January, in the village of Beit Amra in Yatta.

6 February 2016:

- Israeli forces detained two Palestinians from Jenin and East Jerusalem in overnight military raids.

7 February 2016:

- Israeli occupying forces detained 7 Palestinians, including 3 children, and summoned 4 others from across the West Bank.

8 February 2016:

- Israeli occupying forces targeted Palestinian farmers to the east of the Gaza Strip's Al-Bureij refugee camp and fishermen offshore from Gaza City with a barrage of gunfire.
- Israeli occupying forces detained at least 22 Palestinians in overnight raids in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

9 February 2016:

- Israeli occupying forces demolished and removed Palestinian private-owned residential tents and animal barns in Khirbet Tana, a small village to the east of Nablus.
- Israeli settlers assaulted and injured a Palestinian shepherd, Khader Hamad (age 65), in Masafer Yatta, a Bedouin area south of Al-Khalil, while he was grazing sheep.

10 February 2016:

- Israeli occupying forces detained 17 Palestinians, including a child, during pre-dawn military raids across the West Bank.
- A Palestinian child, Omar Jawabra (age 16), was shot and killed in Al-Arroub refugee camp, north of Al-Khalil.
- Israeli settlers attacked the car of a Palestinian driver, Saeed Abu Haniaw, with an axe while he was driving on the Qalqilia-Nablus road.

- Israeli occupying forces demolished three residential structures and an animal barn, and destroyed a water pipeline in the village of Al-Jiftlek, in the northern Jordan Valley.

For all the injustices being perpetuated every day against the Palestinian people, we reiterate our call for immediate international action. We call on the international community to condemn and reject Israel's excessive and indiscriminate use of force against the Palestinian civilian population and to confront this crisis situation without delay with a view to upholding international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and to preventing the continued deterioration of this dangerous situation. In this regard, we reiterate our appeal for protection for the Palestinian people in accordance with international humanitarian law. Moreover, we reiterate that Israel, the occupying Power, must be held fully accountable in accordance with international law and the principles of justice for all of its violations and for its continuing obstruction of peace. A primary step in this regard is action by the Security Council. The Council must immediately act to uphold its Charter duties and implement its own resolutions in order to alleviate this crisis and compel an end to Israel's aggression and crimes, thus tangibly contributing to the decades-long search for a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict before it slips out of reach.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 573 previous letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 22 January 2016 (A/ES-10/710-S/2016/65) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer
of the State of Palestine to the United Nations